

1 I claim:

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3 1. A method of securing a hitch to a tow hook extending from the front portion of a
4 vehicle, the tow hook having an inner periphery bounding a hollow inner passage, the tow hook
5 having upper and lower opposing surfaces, said method comprising the steps of:

6 a. providing a hook engagement member on said hitch, said hook engagement member
7 having an outer periphery commensurate with the inner periphery of said tow hook for
8 allowing said hook engagement member to fit within the hollow inner passage of the tow
9 hook;

10 b. inserting said hook engagement member within the hollow inner passage of said
11 tow hook and engaging the outer periphery of said hook engagement member with at least a
12 portion of the inner periphery of said tow hook; and

13 c. clamping the hitch about the upper and lower surfaces of the tow hook to maintain
14 said hook engagement member in place within the hollow inner passage of the tow hook.
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16 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the inner periphery of the tow hook is of a
17 predetermined shape, and wherein said hook engagement member is shaped to conform to at least a
18 portion of the predetermined shape of the inner periphery of the tow hook to oppose pivotal
19 movement of the hitch with respect to the tow hook.
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21 3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the inner periphery of the tow hook includes opposing
22 sides, and wherein said insertion step includes the step of engaging the outer periphery of said hook
23 engagement member with said opposing sides.
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25 4. The method of Claim 1 wherein said tow hook is a closed U-shaped hook.
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27 5. The method of Claim 1 wherein said tow hook is a J-shaped open hook.
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1 6. The method of Claim 1 wherein said clamping step includes the steps of:

- 2 i. disposing a first portion of said hitch above the upper surface of the tow hook;
- 3 ii. disposing a second portion of said hitch below the lower surface of the tow hook;
- 4 iii. securing the hook engagement member to one of said first and second portions of
- 5 said hitch; and
- 6 iv. drawing said first and second portions of said hitch toward one another to clamp the
- 7 hitch to the tow hook.

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9 7. The method of Claim 6 wherein said step of drawing said first and second portions of

10 said hitch toward one another includes the steps of:

- 11 i. forming a first smooth hole in one of said first and second portions, the first smooth
- 12 hole being generally aligned with the hollow inner passage of the tow hook;
- 13 ii. forming a second threaded hole in the other of said first and second portions, the
- 14 second threaded hole being generally aligned with the hollow inner passage of the tow hook
- 15 and with the first smooth hole;
- 16 iii. inserting a threaded end of a clamping bolt through the smooth hole, through the
- 17 hollow inner passage of the tow hook, and into the threaded hole; and
- 18 iv. tightening the clamp bolt.

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20 8. A hitch assembly for attachment to at least one tow hook of a vehicle, the tow hook

21 having an inner periphery bounding a hollow inner passage, the tow hook having upper and lower

22 opposing surfaces, said hitch assembly comprising:

- 23 a. a first frame member disposed above the upper surface of the tow hook;
- 24 b. a second frame member disposed below the lower surface of the tow hook;
- 25 c. a hook engagement member having an outer periphery commensurate with the inner
- 26 periphery of said tow hook for allowing said hook engagement member to fit within the
- 27 hollow inner passage of the tow hook, said hook engagement member being positioned
- 28 within the hollow inner passage of said tow hook, said hook engagement member being

1 coupled to one of said first and second frame members; and

2 d. a securing member for drawing said first and second frame members against the
3 upper and lower surfaces of the tow hook, respectively, and securing the hitch assembly
4 about the tow hook.

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6 9. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 wherein said hook engagement member is integral with
7 one of said first and second frame members.

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9 10. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 wherein the inner periphery of the tow hook is of a
10 predetermined shape, and wherein said hook engagement member is shaped to conform at least
11 partially to the predetermined shape of the inner periphery of the tow hook to oppose pivotal
12 movement of the hitch assembly with respect to the tow hook.

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14 11. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 wherein said securing member is a bolt having a threaded
15 end, wherein one of said first and second frame members includes a threaded hole, wherein the other
16 of said first and second frame members includes a smooth hole, said bolt extending through the
17 smooth hole, and the threaded end of said bolt engaging the threaded hole.

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19 12. The hitch assembly of Claim 11 wherein said bolt extends at least partially through said
20 hook engagement member.

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22 13. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 wherein said first and second frame members include
23 first and second plates, respectively, and wherein said hook engagement member and the tow hook
24 are held between said first and second plates.

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26 14. The hitch assembly of Claim 13 wherein the tow hook includes an outer periphery, and
27 wherein the hitch assembly further includes a wall extending at an angle from one of the first and
28 second plates, said wall extending proximate the outer periphery of the tow hook.

1 15. The hitch assembly of Claim 13 further comprising a hinge coupling said first and
2 second plates to each other.

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4 16. The hitch assembly of claim 13 further comprising a tongue extending at an angle from
5 said first plate, said tongue being positioned between said hook engagement member and the tow
6 hook within the hollow inner passage of the tow hook when said hitch assembly is attached to the
7 tow hook.

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9 17. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 further comprising a receiver attached to one of said first
10 and second frame members.

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12 18. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 wherein the tow hook is a closed U-shaped hook.

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14 19. The hitch assembly of Claim 8 wherein the tow hook is a J-shaped open hook.

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16 20. A hitch assembly for attachment to first and second tow hooks of a vehicle, the first and
17 second tow hooks being spaced apart from each other by a predetermined distance, each of the first
18 and second tow hooks having an inner periphery bounding a hollow inner passage, said hitch
19 assembly comprising:

20 a. a first frame member extending between opposing first and second ends, the first
21 frame member having a length commensurate with said predetermined distance, the first end
22 engaging the first tow hook and the second end engaging the second tow hook;

23 b. a second frame member disposed proximate the first tow hook opposite the first end
24 of the first frame member and disposed on an opposing side of the first tow hook;

25 c. a third frame member disposed proximate the second tow hook opposite the second
26 end of the first frame member and disposed on an opposing side of the second tow hook;

27 d. a first bolt extending through the hollow inner passage of the first tow hook for
28 clamping the first tow hook between the first frame member and the second frame member;

1 and

2 e. a second bolt extending through the hollow inner passage of the second tow hook
3 for clamping the second tow hook between the first frame member and the third frame
4 member.

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6 21. The hitch assembly of Claim 20 wherein said second and third frame members comprise
7 right and left plates, respectively, the first tow hook being sandwiched between the first end of the
8 first frame member and said right plate, and the second tow hook being sandwiched between the
9 second end of the first frame member and said left plate.

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11 22. The assembly of Claim 21 wherein each of said right and left plates includes a hook
12 engagement member having an outer periphery commensurate with the inner periphery of said first
13 and second tow hooks, the hook engagement member of said right plate being positioned within the
14 hollow inner passage of said first tow hook, and the hook engagement member of said left plate
15 being positioned within the hollow inner passage of said second tow hook.

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17 23. The assembly of Claim 20 further comprising a receiver connected to said first frame
18 member generally between the first and second ends thereof.